

or writing things into the law, or making people obey the law. So, I hope you will just regard that as what it really is. He always talks to us about being a flip-flopper, and I think on the bill that I had this morning, he flip-flopped, so I am not the only one. I don't want to talk about that, because I know I am not supposed to, but I do want to support Senator Duis. I happen to know quite a bit about the problems we have had in our part of the state, and I think that we certainly need to tighten up our laws. It seems like all we want to do is make it easier for people. Make it easier to commit murder. Make it easier to commit rape. We say our laws are too stiff so judges don't enforce them. That should not be any reason not to pass the law. We have got another problem if that is what is going on. I think that we should certainly bring this out where we can debate it, and get this issue before the Legislature and do something for the people in Nebraska. Thank you.

SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Senator Venditte.

SENATOR VENDITTE: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I was one of--I voted to bring this bill before the Legislature. The bill, which you may or may not know, is locked up on committee on a four-to-four vote. Senator Chambers had made the comment that harsh penalties do not address the problem. Well, I strongly disagree with Senator Chambers. I think stronger penalties does address the problem, and I can't understand how Senator Chambers constantly brings up the so-called harsh laws. You know, you talk to the victims of these crimes, you talk to the people who had testified in the committee, and repeatedly, you will hear the cry time and time again, "Where are the laws?" And I certainly would have to concur with the sentiments of those people who had testified that day. They have a concern, and the concern, of course, is the law. There apparently is no law that protects a victim of these crimes today. And how can Senator Chambers say that this will never be applied, the so-called 25 years? Well, my understanding of the law, Senator Chambers, is simply this: If the law says 25 years, no minimum, no parole, then I don't understand how a judge can reduce that sentence. If we, the Legislature, make the intent in the law that 25 years is 25 years, I think the law would stick. But, again, I don't think we have a law that says "a minimum." Everything is arranged, and I think that if we impose this 25 years, bring this bill to the floor of the Legislature, in my opinion, I think that this is something the judicial system would look at and say, you know, "The State Legislature is serious. They want 25 years for first-degree sexual assault crimes." And I think that with that kind of a thrust, I think our judicial system would listen to us, and I think that if we can continue to listen to the cries of the people of the state as we have in Judiciary Committee, and hopefully this cry will come to the floor of the Legislature, I think you will see the need of the kind of laws that we need in this state relative to sexual assault, kinds of crimes, and again, I just want to mention, Senator Duis, I support your move to bring this bill to the floor of the Legislature, and I hope we get the necessary votes to do that.

SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Senator Murphy. Senator Murphy?